

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
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HA-05 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 NEA-10 AID-05 EB-08
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R 251033Z APR 78
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TO USICA WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3647
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 STOCKHOLM 1623

USICA

BRUSSELS FOR LEWINSOHN

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: SEMINAR ON INFRASTRUCTURES OF NEWS COLLECTION
AND DISSEMINATION, INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR STUDY
OF COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

REF: STATE 039810, PARIS 11527

1. SUMMARY: NO SURPRISES MARKED OPENING DAY OF SYMPOSIUM APRIL
24. EXTRA PLENARY SESSION CALLED FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 25, TO
ACCOMMODATE NUMBER OF SPEAKERS, WHOSE STATEMENTS MONDAY GENERALLY
FOLLOWED FAMILIAR PATTERNS. RECURRING THEMES INCLUDED IMBALANCE
IN NEWS FLOW, NEWS AGENCY DOMINANCE. CREATION OF INTERNATIONAL
SUPERVISORY BODY SUGGESTED. PASSAGE OF UNESCO DRAFT DECLARATION
URGED BY SOME BUT WAS NOT A STRONG THEME. "NEW WORLD COMMUNICATION
ORDER" ALTERNATELY "... INFORMATION ORDER" MENTIONED BUT NOT
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EMPHASIZED. MOST BLOC SPEAKERS URGED HALT TO ARMS RACE AND "WAR
PROPAGANDA", A THEME ALSO STRESSED IN OPENING WELCOME BY SEAN
MACBRIDE, PRESIDENT, ICSPC. END SUMMARY

2. SWEDISH EDUCATION MINISTER JAN-ERIK WIKSTROM OPENED
MEETING APRIL 24, NOTING "THAT THE CONTENT OF NEWS REPORTED
AND CIRCULATED IS AND SHOULD BE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF

EACH NEWS AGENCY, NEWSPAPER AND NEWS MEDIA,: QUOTING FROM THE SWEDISH BACKGROUND DOCUMENT BY THOMAS HAMMARBERG, SWEDISH JOURNALIST AND CHAIRMAN OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. DOCUMENT ALSO CONTAINED 63 PAGES OF LISTING OF JOURNALISTS WHO HAVE BEEN HARASSED OR KILLED, AND OF CENSORSHIP CASES.

3. ICSCP PRESIDENT SEAN MACBRIDE SET TONE OF MEETING: "IN SPITE OF OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN ENSURING THAT THE FLOW OF NEWS IS 'BALANCED' AS WELL AS 'FREE' AND THAT IT IS 'FREE' AS WELL AS 'BALANCED', THERE IS AN INCREASING AWARENESS AS TO THE NECESSITY FOR SOME CHANGE IN THE PRACTICES GUIDING NEWS COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION." HE FLOATED IDEA FOR APPOINTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL BODY TO SUPERVISE AND ADVISE ON INFRASTRUCTURE OF NEWS COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION, OR INFORMAL BODY TO RECEIVE AND EXAMINE COMPLAINTS. SEVERAL WESTERN SPEAKERS LATER RAISED QUESTIONS: "WHO IS TO JUDGE THESE JUDGES." MACBRIDE DEVOTED QUARTER OF SPEECH TO "GRAVEST CRISIS HUMANITY HAS EVERY HAD TO FACE THE ACCUMULATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION," ALLUDING TO MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY TO BEWARE OF SOURCES SEEKING TO INFLUENCE JOURNALISTS ON THIS SUBJECT, CALLING IT "COLD WAR PROPAGANDA." BLOC SPEAKERS, INCLUDING THOSE FROM SOVIET UNION (IZVESTYA DIRECTOR ALEXEEV; KRASIKOV, MEMBER OF TASS DIRECTORATE), AND SPEAKER FROM HUNGARY ALSO BRIEFLY USED THEME IN SPEECHES. MACBRIDE ALSO CONTENDED THAT TWO-THIRDS OF DAILY NEWS OUTPUT COMES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM NEW YORK KSTOCKHOLM LIBERAL-LEFT DAGENS
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NYHETER USED THIS AS APRIL 24 STORY LEAD AND HEADLINE.)

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4. MAX SNIJDER, INTERNATIONAL PRESS INSTITUTE, WHILE NOTING THAT THERE MAY BE A NEED TO REDRESS CERTAIN NEWS-FLOW IMBALANCES, SUGGESTED "WE SHALL BE GLAD TO BE OF ASSISTANCE -- IF WE CAN -- TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING POSSIBLE SHORTCOMINGS IN THE WORKINGS OF PRESS FREEDOM," ADDING THAT "YOU WILL FIND ALL OF US, AND ALL OF OUR MEMBERS, ADAMANT IF ANYONE PROPOSES CHANGES WHICH RESTRUCT THIS FREEDOM AND HAMPER THE FLOW OF INFORMATION."

5. AN IMPASSIONED, POLEMIC AND SOMETIMES EMOTIONAL FOLLOW-UP TO SNIJDER CAME FROM SAAD MUJBER, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF LIBYA'S JANA NEWS AGENCY, WHO URGED THAT "WE WILL NOT ACCEPT THE TERM FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION, PERIOD...IT HAS BEEN USED TO OUR DETRIMENT SO FAR." MUJBER STRUCK OUT AT THE US SEVERAL TIMES, CRITICIZING PRESIDENT CARTER, THE CIA, US SLUMS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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CRIME ON STREETS, THREATENING "TO GO TO MILITARY ACTION LIKE THE AMERICANS IN VIETNAM WHO ARE THREATENING TO GO TO THE ARABIAN GULF AND CONTROL THE SOURCES OF IT, MY OIL." AT HIS CALMER MOMENTS, HE PROPOSED THAT "THE GIANT INTERNATIONAL MEDIA... SHOULD TAKE THE FIRST STEP. . . TO SHOW RESTRAINT" TO BALANCE "ASSASSINATION COVERAGE" WITH COVERAGE OF POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS.

6. ALTHOUGH MUJBER TENDED TO EXTREMISM, MOST DEVELOPING-COUNTRY AND BLOC SPEAKERS UNIFORMLY FOLLOWED THE COMMON THIRD WORLD THEMES OF NEWS AGENCY DOMINANCE, CRITICIZED THE ONE-WAY FLOW OF NEWS, SUGGESTED THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES NEED MORE FLEXIBILITY IN CONTROLLING NEWS TO MAKE DOMESTIC PROGRESS, CRITICIZED THE RESIDUES OF COLONIALISM, AT TIMES SUGGESTED THAT WESTERN ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED, OBJECTED TO COMMERCIALISM OF NEWS, MAINTAINED THAT MEDIA SHOULD NOT "INTERFERE" IN AFFAIRS OF OTHER STATES. IZVESTIA DIRECTOR ALEXEEV APPARENTLY OPENED DOOR TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE BY REFERRING TO RECENT CAIRO MEETING AND NOTING THAT THIRD WORLD WANTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PRINCIPLE OF MORAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS; REMARK NOT COMPLETELY CLEAR DUE TO TRANSLATOR

DIFFICULTIES. THEME NOT PICKED UP BY OTHER SPEAKERS. ALEXEEV, AMONG OTHERS, URGED ADOPTION OF DRAFT DECLARATION "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

7. WESTERN SPEAKERS WERE UNIVERSALLY MODERATE, WITH SOME SUGGESTING THAT TIME FOR ANALYSIS IS PAST. THAT IT IS "TIME TO END ATTACKS AGAINST WESTERN AGENCIES AND FIND WAYS "TO SOLVE PROBLEMS (RICHARD O'REGAN, AP GENERAL DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE, AFRICA, MIDEAST) AND THAT "THE PROBLEM IS NOT THESE EMPTY ACCUSATIONS. . . THE POINT BASICALLY IS THE FREEDOM THAT NEWSPAPERS SHOULD HAVE TO INFORMATION -- IT IS ACCESS THIS SEMINAR SHOULD BE DISCUSSING." JULIUS HUMI, UPI VICE-PRESIDENT FOR EUROPE, NOTED COMPLEXITY OF AGENCY OPERATIONS AND INVITED DELEGATES TO TAKE TIME, IN SMALL GROUPS, TO VISIT HEADQUARTERS OF INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES, ADDING "THE
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WHOLE TONE (OF THESE MEETINGS) WOULD CHANGE AFTERWARD." CLAUDE ROUSSEL, PRESIDENT DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, SUGGESTED THAT "WE SHOULD TELL THE THIRD WORLD WE'RE QUITE WILLING TO COOPERATE," AND NOTING THAT THERE IS MORE AND MORE USE OF WIRE SERVICE COPY AND THAT CONTACTS ARE TENDING TO DEVELOP NATURALLY. CONCERN OVER GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF NEWS FLOW WAS VOICED.

8. AFTER 19 SPEAKERS MONDAY, SPECIAL PLENARY CONTINUES TUESDAY WITH FRANK TREMAINE, VICE-PRESIDENT UPI; THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY; OLOF WAHLGREN, FORMER PRESIDENT IPI; GEORGE BEEBE, MIAMI HERALD AND IAPA; THREE THIRD WORLDERS. MONDAY SPEAKERS ALSO INCLUDED: ICSCP COMMISSION MEMBER BOGDAN OSOLNIK, YUGOSLAVIA; MARCEL CAZE, UNION EUROPEENE DE RADIODIFFUSION (UER) FRANCE; D.R. MANKEKAR, PRESIDENT OF NON-ALIGNED "POOL" AGENCY FROM INDIA; JOE RODRIGUES, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, NATION, NAIROBI; ISSIAK TAO, DIRECTOR, AGENCE IVOIRIENNE DE PRESSE, IVORY COAST; KAARLE NORDENSTRENG, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISTS, FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA; MICHE DE SAINT-PIERRE, FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES EDITERUS DE JOURNAUX, ET PUBLICATIONS, PARIS; FERNANDO REYES MATTA, INSTITUTO LATIN-AMERICANO DE ESTUDIOS TRANSNACIONALES, MEXICO; ROBERT SAVIO, DIRECTOR, INTER PRESS SERVICE, ITALY. FORTYTHREE COUNTRIES REPRESENTED WITH DELEGATES OR OBSERVERS.

9. RFE, VOA NOT MENTIONED.
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